772 Then all things assembled and began to rumble in order to complete the creation of the universe. The glã remained within themselves and delegated to zo the responsibility of liberating the designated and animated objects which they contained and of which they had created the essence. Zo took possession of them and joined their elements into a huge ball, kuru, called yo yebali, "invisible yo": zo gave yo the principle of the seed and endowed it with attraction and power (1).

1. zo ye kise masa di yo ma, ka samani masa bla la, ka mineni masa bla a la.

Yo was the spirit, more exactly "the thought and action," that was to work out the creation, using the "signed objects" determined by glã.

772 /5/ The glã glã zo is represented by three engravings on wood.
532 The first, glã kele, represents the two glã in the shape of two spirals in opposite directions and with connected points of origin; below this is engraved "the object with four arms" from which issued the signs (2). These signs, 226 in number, are barely sketched out, showing

● [824] 2. Today this object is represented by a twig of Acacia albida, called "the wood that separates the signs," ti kla dyiri. Its bark is removed in such a way as to outline the multiplication sign enclosed in an oval representing the world.

that "the creation of glã takes place in the invisible, the unknown, the unrealized." The second, glã dya, is composed of 226 horizontal or vertical lines, the counterparts or "witnesses" of words. The third, glã zo, is an oval divided into seven compartments (a square in the middle and two times three lateral sections) in which the symbolic representations are clearly engraved. In the middle of the central square, there is an oval containing six signs which represent simultaneously "the egg of the world and yo, the creating voice."

772 2. The yo

The creation of the perceptible universe beginning with yo is conceived of as a progression in "thinking," tasi (3). This progression,

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1. pemba ni faro ye dyɛ̃ dyokã̃ ani dyɛ̃ dyotyoko kɛ, sankaba dlala faro fe gundola miri deme ni ko la, pemba djigini dugukolo ka, a dõ teli yala, dyobe na warilike yereyereli, mbolo fla yenko.

Pemba's Reign

For seven years, Pemba was a whirlwind (1). Transformed into an

1. This part of the myth concerning the pembele was collected by S. de Ganay and published in the Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique under the title: "Aspects de mythologie et de symbolique bambara. /Aspects of Bambara Mythology and Symbolism/." We have made a few changes in the text.

acacia seed, he moved about in space, carried by the wind and entraining the rain; finally, exhausted, he came to rest on the earth which hid him under a few lumps of dirt and enabled him to germinate; a tree, the balanza (2), grew but soon died of drought. There re-

[834]

2. Acacia albida. The Dogon give an equally important place to the acacia albida in the prelude of creation. The first materialization of the world rotated between two thorns of the tree, placed symetrically point to point. Its shape was that of a rotating, flattened out truncated cone made from the wood of the same tree.

mained no more than a sort of rectangular board lying on the bare earth. It was called pembele, also ko kun, "the head of things."

Pemba was alone on the earth in the shape of a tree root which potentially contained the creation of animals and plants. Beneath

773 him his own decomposition collected. As he occasionally moved about in a whirlwind, weary of his solitude, he said to himself one day: "The dust of my tracks will dissipate my nostalgia." Having spoken these words, his tracks came together and the wind pushed them towards the mound of earth and rotting wood. He kneaded this mass with his saliva, thus incorporating into it a breath-soul, ni; he gave it a shape and an immaterial double, dya. However, as he distrusted it, he turned the double over to Faro, master of sky and the waters, guardian of the dya. Then Pemba laid himself down upon the shape for four days. On the fifth day, he heard, coming from beneath him a high-pitched feminine voice which said: "Get up, I am exhausted." "No," he replied, "first I will give you a name so that you may be my wife."

This creature had a head with long, pointed ears and the torso of an animal; the rest of the body was human except the tail. Until her fall, she retained that shape.

In order that she might become the womb of future beings, the repository of knowledge and the stimulant to Pemba's thoughts, she had to assure him of her total love. She promised him this and thereupon received the name of Muso koroni kundye, "little old woman with a white head,"—little, for she had issued from him; old, for she was an emanation for him and therefore his equal in age; white, /17/ because, coming from him, she was as pure as he. Thus named, she got up and became his wife. Although he did not enter her, she received multiple inseminations from him and in exchange he took his own sap back. She gave birth to plants and animals, the first of which was the panther. All that she engendered had a soul or vital force, ni, and a double, dya, similar to those which Pemba had deposited in her as he kneaded her with his saliva. At that time, no being was articulated (1).

1. Such beings with supple, non-articulated limbs are called masibadé.

773 824 The earth began to swarm with beings who appeared without order as they were born at random; they all went to worship Pemba as their creator, calling him god, Ngala. The latter wished to assert his complete domination over this chaotic work /of creation/; so he asked Mousso Koroni to plant him in the earth. He immediately took

773 root by his own power and became the first of all trees, the balanza,
824 green in dry season and dry in rainy season, and it extended his power (1).

1. The balanza is not Pemba in his totality, which is spirit, force, and matter. It is Pemba's earthly metamorphosis and, more especially, the image of his fertile masculinity. Pemba took the shape of the balanza in order to continue his work of creation and to bring death on the earth.

773 The human beings born of Faro lived amidst the burning rocks and sought refuge under that tree, whose power was obvious to all since it needed no water to keep it green. They prayed to it and received from it directives for their lives. Since they were immortal, time did not exist. However, they figured their age according to their pilosity: at age 12, the public hair grew; at 22, the hair under the arms; at 36, the beard was black; at 52, the hair whitened. When he could count the four types of hair, his being was complete; but seven years later, he suddenly grew thin and lost his vitality, and his soul weakened; he was then an old man.

Men at that time knew no language and had no clothes. They lived naked and communicated to each other through gestures and grunts. At the instigation of Mousso Koroni, and in order to recognize
[801] each other, they scarred their face with three or four lines, three being the sexual symbol of man (the penis and two testicles) and four that of woman (the four labia). In keeping with this, each person, according to his sex, would repeat his actions three or four times.

Men at that time received their food from /18/ the sky, thanks to the spirit Téliko, who, up in space, watched over Faro's waters. During the rainy season, he would send them stones from the seventh heaven containing karite nuts, si kolo. From these stones the women extracted oil which they ate with fruit. One day, during the dry season, a woman who had drawn oil from four nuts wiped her hands on the balanza under which she was seated alone. "This, I want," said the tree. From then on, all the women offered him oil and were imitated by men who later partook of the cult.

However, the balanza was no longer satisfied with only Mousso Koroni. It demanded that all the women give it their love. Therefore

773 Empty space, or tyema, which separates the sky from the earth, remains under the domination of Téliko. It is the domain of air, the winds and insects.

773 823 The earth is divided into seven parts which correspond to the seven heavens and are as follows: (1) dugukolo, earth; (2) dugukolo fi, black earth; (3) dugukolo dye, white earth; (4) dugukolo mana, shedding of the earth; (5) dugukolo bele, "stone of the earth"; (6) dugukolo noro, soft earth; (7) dugukolo wolofla, the seventh earth.

On earth, Faro first created deep watery holes, the abysses of the sea and the rivers which he haunts. He himself dug the first well, the ponds, and the bed of torrents. He established the schedule of the rains which fall from the seventh part of heaven to the seventh part of the earth and constitute the purification and reparation of cosmic disorders.

773 825 824 He then classified living beings. In the east, wild and domestic animals, each group headed respectively by the lion and the horse; in the west, the birds; in the north, the fish with the miri (1) at their

1. Micralestes acutidens.

head, the sauria, and the batrachia; in the south, all plant life which he divided into three categories (2), indicating the purifying and

2. These are respectively: herbs, bin, headed by the narakata (Digitaria digitata); plants, fura, the first being the sindya (Cassia siberiana), and trees, dyiri, divided into three categories headed respectively by the karite, the baobab, and the nere (Parkia biglobosa).

medicinal power of each.

773 Men were also named and classified and the races distributed according to the quality of the blood into which Faro inscribed the destiny of each. He determined the castes, beginning with the slaves.

He then decided each one's foods and, to protect /30/ the species from destruction, he indicated the forbidden foods, animal and vegetable, which each category of beings had to respect.

778 understandable that the strength of the large pembele should be preserved intact since it represents the world. No ritual concerning it is celebrated alone by the man in charge without the presence of a council of elders. Its four corners can be scraped only under worthwhile circumstances for, according to the informant, the god pembele will not tolerate his being used for trifles. As the corners are gradually scraped off and consequently the nyama contained in these corners is reduced, the earth becomes worn out. And if the earth should lose its nyama, all would be empty of its substance; the millet would still grow but its stalk would yield no grain... women would bear no children, no longer having any nyama. Bereft of strength, people would no longer be able to fight. The earth would subsist, but would be sterile" (1).

1. S. de Ganay, op. cit., p. 200.

The Balanza

824 The tree balanza, the plant form of Pemba's metamorphosis, vanquished by Faro, is no longer worshipped by men. However, the Bambara's attitude towards it and certain ritual gestures of which it is /38/ sometimes the object, recall the time when, after having spread its domination over all creation, it introduced death to the human species.

[761] In certain settlements, the belief is that whoever rests in its shade dies, the tree having taken his dya. In others, women still make it [782] offerings of karite oil, despite advice from men who have informed them of its inefficacy. They lie at its base, simulating illness, agony, and then death to recall the painful events that have brought them to men; finally they touch the ground successively with each of their four principal articulations as a sign of submission, before smearing the tree trunk with the oil they have brought. In still others, [843] in order to recall that births used to take place near the tree, pregnant women are presented by their husbands to the tree to each childbirth.

The fields surrounding the settlements in the region of Ségou are covered profusely with balanza. The device of Ségou, which tells of the history of the town, enumerates the names of the trees planted at the time of its founding. This device also mentions kokuruni (literally, little humped back), the balanza of Banankoroni (pl. I, a),

824 considered as the founding ancestor transformed into a tree. The old men of the village come to the tree each year, leaning their backs [844] against its trunk, while the placentae of newly delivered women are hung on it (1).

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1. The balanza groves around the Bambara settlements have attracted the attention of botanists. M. G. Roberty, in Les Associations végétales de la vallée moyenne du Niger /The Vegetable Associations of the Middle Nigerian Valley/, has studied their agricultural role: "The Dumosaeptum arboreitoides, cultivation under the balanzas. Artificial, well defined landscape. Trees losing their leaves during the rainy season, regaining them during the dry season, thorny, regularly spaced, but planted in the distant past. The Acacia albida loses its leaves in June and grows them again in December, thus furnishing shade in the dry season and humus in the rainy season. The Dumosaeptum owes it its permanent villages.... The date of the introduction of this very useful tree into the western Sudan remains shrouded in mystery, as is the time and method of its dissemination over cultivated fields. It is probable that the Acacia albida comes from eastern Africa, somewhere south of the equator. How did it come as far as the Bambara country without losing its original seasonal cycle? What sultan, or what agronomer of genius forced its multiplication around the Bambara villages? These questions remain, for the time being, without answers. The tales of the first European conquerors seem to have proved that numerous "tatas," the enormous citadels of red mud, were enclosed by living balanzas fences with joined trunks... It is probable that their military use has preceeded everywhere their agricultural use... We have very little information concerning

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the latter.... We are familiar enough with the Bambara agricultural customs, but none of them would have brought about the spread of the balanzas, their regular spacing in the fields, and their protection from goats. In almost all the cases we have observed, the balanzas are of considerable age, development and density. There lies in this subject a fine dissertation topic for a young ethnographer and naturalist." (pp. 135, 136).

The myths of the Bambara answer M. Roberty's questions.

/39/ Mousso Koroni

776 Mousso Koroni is the impure earth; she symbolizes all that is opposed to light: darkness, night, witchcraft. She is also the symbol of rebellion, disorder, and impurity. Pemba pursued her in vain in his effort to take back what he had given her: the "words" she had received from him were divulged to men in spite of him.

Although no cult honors her and no sacrifice is offered her, her name is cited in various ceremonies and mentioned in the chants; her actions are recalled by certain gestures in the ritual.

776 304 On the other hand, she is the initiator of the separation of the sexes realized in the human body by the removal of the foreskin and the clitoris, an operation which after her betrayal, she performed on all those she met. In this way, she placed them in the same state of rupture in which she found herself: a female principle as opposed to Pemba, the male principle. In addition, she is present in every human being in the form of an evil force, the wanzo, which she had communicated to all those she approached, and of which one must rid oneself through the methods she herself inaugurated: circumcision and excision (1).

1. See p. 95.

776 341 Mousso Koroni is also the originator of certain agricultural techniques which she taught men, and every year, in certain villages, she

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up (1). The small miri (2), "mother of fish," is regarded as the

1. The ordure has its use in religious life. See p. 258.

2. Micralestes acutidens.

creator and guardian of all fish. Its name is associated with all prayers that are recited on the waters. The dodo (3) is Faro's messenger in

3. Tétrodon fahaka.

the waters and transmits his orders and directives, and the polyo (4)

4. The polyo fi is Herterobranchus longifilis; the polyo ble is Heterobranchus bidorsalis.

is the gatekeeper, controlling those who wish to penetrate into the spirit's domain.

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Certain plants are in constant communication with him. The yayale (5), "Faro's grass," grew on the mound where the mythical twins

5. Andropogon (Hyparrhenia) hirtus.

were born. The tomato, ngoyo (6), is assimilated in the blood. It

6. Lycopersicum cerasiforme, the native tomato (pl. II, a).

carries within it the potential embryo for its seeds are multiples of seven, the number of duality. It is by means of the tomato that Faro impregnates women for it possesses, like humans and animals, a ni and a dya. When it has a double bloom, the two twin tomatoes are given to the women so that they may bear twins. If the fruit is single on the stem, it is split in two to be cooked and eaten. The gesture of splitting separates it symbolically from its dya which is thus returned to Faro (7).

776 824 7. Only vegetables whose spiritual essence does not have to be preserved are cooked, "for to cook is to shatter the soul."

776 824 244 782 In each village are grown one or several small fields of tomatoes, called "Faro's fields," or "fields of twins." The fruits of these fields are reserved for the worship of the spirit (1).

1. On the site of the ancient village of Soroba, at the edge of a pond located near the present-day village, there are two rectangular fields of tomatoes dedicated to male twins and four square fields dedicated to female twins in the village. Each year the villagers gather at the edge of the pond for a ceremony. The symbolic words relating to twins are recited and a prayer is said, to be followed by ablutions.

The fruit that is harvested is offered to the spirit by squashing it on a neighboring tree trunk.

776 823 /49/ All metals belong to Faro. The seven /sic/ principal metals are the following: copper (male), brass (female), gold, silver, tin, and iron. Copper and brass come from the fifth sky (koblenkaba). They descend at each thunderclap and, along with the "thunderstones," penetrated into the soil. They were discovered by a diviner at the bottom of a pond that had dried up because of a broken taboo. Be- [301] cause of their divine origin, copper and brass represent "Faro's sounds." These sounds twist themselves around the spiralled copper or brass earrings that everyone wears and penetrate the eardrum, thus making it possible to hear words. Gold plays a part in the building of certain altars (boli) to which it confers strength and stability.

The sacrifices made with or on copper, brass, or gold have a restraining influence on the spirit for they are of his own essence.

No woman wearing copper, brass, or gold jewelry, may cross the Niger without opening her luggage out of deference to the spirit, for "all ornaments belong to him and often must be returned to him after death."

[784] It is taboo to bring metal into contact with cow's butter, an oily substance that does not allow water to penetrate.

Spiritual Principles (1)

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1. A few comments on the spiritual principles of the Bambara (in particular on the dya and the nyama) have been collected in the chapter entitled "Théorie des âmes" by Tauxier, La Religion bambara (pp. 14-25), in which the author appraises the works of the Abbé Henry and of Ch. Monteil. Some of the observations made in the following chapter have been summarized by the author in "La Personne chez les Bambara" and in "Note sur le tere chez les Bambara /Note on the Tere among the Bambara/."

It will be useful to compare this study of spiritual principles with the studies made among the Dogon and presented respectively by M. Griaule, S. de Ganay, and the author in Masques Dogon, Les Devises des Dogon, and Les Âmes des Dogon.

761 The Soul, ni, and the Double, dya:

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[826] Faro controls the principle of life in water, which is his realm as well as the life-giving element par excellence. In the bodies of living beings, this principle has its seat in the blood. The blood of the sacrifices offered to the spirit (or failing that, the juice of the tomato, a transformation of blood) is a contribution to the reservoir of life controlled by Faro—life which he redistributes in all its forms throughout the universe. Water is the privileged element in which life may persevere indefinitely. Elsewhere, life is maintained only if water comes to nourish it.

761 776 842 833 Faro's creative function is materialized by each marital partner eating a tomato before sexual relations. This act is accompanied by the recital of a prayer. The juice of the fruit, which contains the body of the future child, transmits life according to the following mechanism:

761 776 842 824 Faro receives the offerings of tomatoes grown ritually in the consecrated fields, as well as the blood of victims slain in his name above the waters. Blood and juice, spreading over water, the fertilizing agent, are collected by the swallow, Faro's airborne messenger. Liberated in space, they return to the soil with fertilizing rain and penetrate the tomato seeds which thus contain a particle of generative power.

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2. Grouped hierarchally, children, male adults, and women form religious societies or institutions, dyo. Each dyo is charged with the upkeep of altars which serve to preserve the spiritual forces of the group. (See p.

the dying man to go into the water and place itself under Faro's protection. At the moment of delivery, both ni and dya return to the body of the newborn child who replaces the dead man, but they return in reversed order: the dya is returned to the body of the child and becomes his ni; the ni of the deceased mixes with the birth water spread on the ground which forms the shadow (suma) and will be his double, the twin (1). In the case of a boy, the dya will be female; in the

[844
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1. The blood of childbirth represents the excess tomato juice absorbed by the woman, that which remains in the womb after the formation of the embryo. On the eighth day after birth, the mother of the parturient woman squeezes three or four tomatoes (depending on the sex of the newborn) into a gourd which she then gives to the child's father. The latter makes his wife drink the juice to replace the blood which she has lost and which is considered impure.

case /59/ of a girl, it will be male. These movements are independent of the sex of the deceased as the spirit reverses the sexes when necessary. Each human being is thus both male and female [828] through his soul and his double. This conception of human nature, which is fundamental to the Bambara, is expressed in the symbolism of numbers. The number seven is formed of three (male sexual symbol) [801] and four (female sexual symbol) and represents the complete man. In addition, on another level, the number six is that of male twins, seven that of mixed twins (and the hermaphrodite), and eight that of female twins. The body of the newborn child is gently tapped [844] by the number of strokes representing the above figures in order to call the child's ni according to its sex.

831 lines or dots depending upon the sex of those who used them. Thus,
801 women marked their spindles with four lines whereas men twisted three threads on their shuttles.

826 On the metaphysical level, man's body, "the seed of the world," is identified with the cereal grain. The Bambara separate cereal
824 grains into seven parts, corresponding to a division of the human
812 organs into seven groups (1). Man and grain are one and identical in

1. The divisions of the grain are as follows: kungu, "little beard of millet," involucre; fara dye, "white bark," glume and glumales; fara fi, "black bark," bran and protein aceous bark; fara mugu, "farinaceous bark" (which corresponds to a milky diastatic zone); mugu dunta, "flour for eating," starch; kolo dye, "white bone," embryo; kise de, "son of grain," the micropyle from which the rootlet issues at the time of germination. The classification of organs in relation to these divisions is under study. We thank M. Pitot of the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire for the identification of the parts of the grain corresponding to the native divisions. In certain villages, grains undergo a process of hulling and the determined elements only are used in the making up of the ritually offered millet mash.

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their substance. On the other hand, the basic foods, that is, the eight principal cereals, are symbolically present in the collarbones (kolo kalanjiri, or ka kolo). Man carries within him his subsistance, and its location reflects the person's general condition (2). As proof

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2. See p. 53, n. 2.

of /72/ man's spiritual integrity, these grains leave him when he is in a state of impurity. He is then drained of his substance and subsistence. Thepurpose of purification is to reestablish this wholeness.

812 Moreover, the bonds which unite the whole person, body and
561 spiritual principles, to the cosmos, are made clear by the fact that

782 As an example we will summarize below the ritual killing of albinos as it was practiced under the royalty. This underlines the mystical value of the victim and is an excellent example of the mechanism inherent in sacrifice; it brings out the ritual value of the details on each of which the Bambara place particular emphasis. Finally, it confirms the value and symbolism of different parts of the body as described in the preceding chapter.

782 /95/ The kings of Ségou were formerly provided with albinos by a 826 man from the village of Pelengena who kept them prisoners and set them aside for this purpose. But this man exploited them by shaving their hair and selling it to the chiefs of neighboring villages as symbols of the men whom, sooner or later, they could reckon to have under their domination. The chief, having counted his subjects, war prisoners held as slaves as well as captives received as tribute, would prepare as many small sticks as there were men; then he would mix up these sticks with the hair and bury them all in the wall over the sill of the entrance to his home. The hair is supposed to represent beforehand an increase in the subjects of his domain and to help bring in the taxes.

But the albinos themselves were kept for the king who sacrificed them to Faro in cases involving the affairs of the kingdom.

1. When the king found himself in difficulties of an administrative nature, the victim was cut in half through the middle of the body at the level of the abdomen by means of a rope of the da fiber (1): his

[283 824]

1. Hibiscus. The nyama fiber was considered impure and could not be used for the albino.

cries, gestures, and excrement were considered the vehicles of a nyama which "would eliminate the difficulty encountered by the king." No one was supposed to hear his cries which were not intended for human ears but for Faro, to whom suffering was also due. The king, above all, should not hear the screams under penalty of failing in his enterprise, and yet he had to be present at the torture and watch it with complete detachment.

The lower half of the victim's body was Faro's due. It was carried to the Niger by three men if the victim was a male, or by four if it was a female. One of them carried the body on his head.

773 knowing its power, men at first used it sparingly. A question was never
829 discussed twice. If a request was reiterated, after an objection, the party requested would bow and agree at the risk and peril of the person making the request."

Men first lived by gathering and later by fishing and hunting without tools, using only /100/ hands to seize their prey, and nails and teeth to tear and cut it. Gradually this primitive life changed; technologies developed one by one according to a chronology which the present Bambara still remember.

773 The first raw material used, according to a tradition which is not confined to the Bambara alone, was the fiber of the nyama tree (1)

[824] 1. Bauhinia reticulata (in the north), Bauhinia Thonningii (in the south).

(nyama fu) out of which were woven the first fishing nets, the first sling, and the first loincloth (2).

[17] 2. The Dogon also mention this fiber as the first material used by men. With them as with the Bambara, it has a ritual function. See M. Griaule, Dieu d'eau, p. 26.

When they began to work the soil, they developed a set of primitive wooden tools. At the same time, they invented a throwing weapon made of the same material. Wood remained in use for a long time; the invention of weaving and crude pottery goes back to this period. Later, they came to know stone tools, iron, and the forge. The art of house building, about which no myth has been gathered until now, seems to have developed much later, after the discovery of iron (3).

3. Certain parts of the investigation concerning technology have been summarized by the author in "l'Arme et l'outil chez les anciens Bambara /Weapons and Tools among the Ancient Bambara/," Africa, Vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 105-111.

The study of this assemblage of tools and of their ritual use is most suggestive because they are a first indication of technological

291 him and joke with him, indicating by semi-ritual jokes his accession to a new status.

291 773 Men's first garment was the skirt of nyama fibers (Fig. 8, A). The bark was beaten and prepared by means of a club, a wooden club, gosilande or kuruninde, which is /106/ supposed "to contain potentially all human technology invented as the need arose." It is said of this club that it is "the mold of perfection and the place from which all useful things issue." The club was also originally a primitive instrument of rhythm (1); the hammering of blows "chased away the evil

[783] 1. kow dyele bwo yoro. On certain occasion when the Komo masks are brought out, the chief carries on his head the gosilande which represents the universe. Certain collective purifications are also executed with this instrument at the crossroads (see p. 186).

[755] sounds emitted by Téliko at the time of his revolt." Even today, a deafmute is seated near the gosilande which is prayed to so that he may be rid of his infirmity. The clothing of a woman in labor, in [844] order to purify it, is beaten with the gosilande at the same time the infant utters its first cry. Dyed clothing is beaten not only to make the color penetrate, but also to chase out any impurity.

When they first learned about cotton, and after the invention of weaving, the Bambara made garments which are in disuse today but of which they still make specimens for ritual purposes. In fact, with the exception of the loincloth, these ancient garments are worn only during religious ceremonies and their principal function is to represent the ancestors who were their progenitors.

291 773 386 The first garment woven was an imitation of the fiber skirt. The men made loincloth (mboko nimba) still worn today by the uncircumcised and dyed it yellow, wolo (2) (Fig. 8, B), a color which

● [824] 2. This dye is made with the leaves of the ngalama (Angeissus leiocarpus), which are boiled, dried, and pulverized. The powder is put in water.

represents that which a certain disease gives to the black's skin,

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to replace the blood lost in childbirth; this piece is then burned to hasten the healing of the wounds.

The loincloth of a woman who has given birth to twins is made of the sukaba band with large, regular, alternating squares of yellow and indigo. The mother places on the garment as an offering a little of the millet mash she feeds her children for the first time.

The band nyoronga was formerly used for shrouds. The king would wear a whole garment of this or had three bands sewn onto his tunic when he went off to war; thus he wore his own shroud. A brave man would tie a piece of it to the barrel of his rifle to show his indifference in the face of death. A strip was tied to the right hand of those killed on the battlefield as a reward for having done their duty. Today, a shred of this band is hung at the door of a home where a death has occurred; People bandage a wounded limb with it before going to the healer's.

The wutu tyerokole with three stripes is worn by a child born after the death in infancy of numerous brothers and sisters. It represents the departure of these members of the family and their return in the newborn. Shaking such a band in the air honors the seventh sky and the seventh earth and asks their protection for the child. This cloth is never worn at funerals.

/113/ The kemba (literally, mother of scarifications) (Pl. III, a, 10) substitutes for scarifications when it has not been possible to perform them; on the other hand, this band is taboo to those who are ritually scarred.

The warabawolo (Pl. III, a, 12) represents the lion of the Diara: the first son of this family was born on this cloth. A boy born with a lock of hair on his forehead is seated on the cotton band to make him strong and rich. Formerly the king made a rug for his throne out of it. Since the lion is their taboo, the Diara do not have the right to wear it or even to see it.

Weapons and Tools

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Originally, men lived by hunting and fishing. But hunger drove them to eat plants of which the first three are the yayalẽ, an aquatic plant commonly found on the shores of the Niger; the narakata, couch grass; and the norolã̀ size, commonly called cramcram(1). Long

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1. These three plants are respectively: Andropogon (Hyparrhenia) hirtus, Digitaria debilis, Cenchrus catharticus.

before the cultivation of cotton and cereals was known to them, the Bambara worked the soil with wooden sticks around the base of those grasses whose seeds they then sowed. As their stock of tools developed, they began to make the first hoes and axes. In the case of the Mandé Bambara (2) the origin of these tools is linked with the history of the

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2. The names and the origin of tools of the Bambara of the Ségou region are different.

blacksmiths, numu, who form a kind of caste in this part of Africa as in many others. They practice endogamy, maintain joking relationships, 'senankuya, with other Blacks, and are in charge of certain cults dedicated to ancestors and to Faro (3).

3. On the myth of the divine origin of blacksmiths, see S. de Ganay, "Notes sur la théodicée bambara." See also infra, p. 53 n. 1

Before the discovery of metal, ancestors of the present blacksmiths worked with wood, then stone. From then on they bore the name of numu, a term which today is reserved exclusively for the artisans of iron, jirifa numu or farafa numu, according to whether they worked with wood or stone (4).

4. L. Desplagnes mentions the historical aspect of the origin and role of the Sudanese blacksmiths (Le Plateau central nigérien /The Central Nigerian Plateau/, p. 110).

The peoples issued from the intermixture of the ou, shepherds (Getules), with the ar, sedentary tribes (Fari), have already been pointed out in earliest antiquity by writers, historians, and geographers who called them Numidians. Salluste tells us that "The Faronsu, in mixing with the

622 bones," that is to say, that he may live to be so old that his bones
778 will be visible through his skin which is transparent.

In (n) the bent part of the wood, called kuntigi tigiya jigi (literally, /136/ support of the chief's deed), is planted over the hair of the previously shaved albino (in o) from which it takes its strength.

[801] In (k), twenty-two small sticks are the symbol of the number 22, representing "the ensemble of words received by the ancestor Koumabana who was never caught unawares by anyone." In depositing these sticks, the officiator expresses the wish that the chief may become unbeatable like the ancestor.

[801] In (h), eight small sticks of zekene wood (1) represent the eight

[824] 1. Balanites aegyptica. This bush, according to popular belief, grows over the tomb of a man who died "with rancor and bitterness, as did Koumabana."

ancestors; they signify that man must be, like Koumabana, master of words and that he must be "true to his word."

In (f), the bird tatugu kononi, master of fire, is buried. The prayer recited states that it must be able to penetrate into the earth and come out freely, for since mythical times it has played a decisive role in combats (2).

2. See p. 155. The chief, who is sometimes obligated to declare war, must be able to win it.

In (g) is buried the head of the first child to die in the chief's family, in order to recall the loss suffered and to avoid its recurrence. On the skull are marked the signs of the person: two times 3 and 7, or two times 4 and 7, depending upon the sex of the deceased. In (j) the hair is buried, a testimony to the misfortune and the loss which should be compensated for. In (e) is placed the skin of the forehead, divided into two pieces; the piece on the right signifies that Faro is free to give the child for as long as he chooses; on the piece on the left are engraved the eight signs of the word, recalling that Faro, master of the word, is also master of the destiny of the deceased, whose number has been reckoned among the dead. In (p) a small

194 The ancestors are worshipped in various places: at the doors and
769 thresholds of houses, at the cemetery, and at stone altars placed at
778 the intersections of lanes and in public squares. These positive cults, which are aimed at the acquisition of beneficial forces, have as a counterpart, cults in which the villagers rid themselves of all their unlucky and infectious elements; these take place, in particular, at the corssroads, dangu, which are placed under the guardianship of the earth Soba spirits.

It would be impossible to treat all of the cults of the Bambara villages. Among these, three have caught our attention; they concern the dasiri, the dangu, and the ancestral altar stones.

A. The dasiri

194 The word dasiri (literally, which binds the mouth) designates the
776 invisible spirit, Faro's representative entrusted with watching over
778 /138/ the village, as well as the seat of this spirit and, sometimes too, the animal which accompanies it or symbolizes it.

The spirit haunts a rock, a thicket, or a tree situated near the village; the approaches to this spot are reserved for the elder in charge of the ritual (1).

[824] 1. In Massala and Soroba it is a baobab tree; in Sama, a tamarind tree, etc. See the observations on the dasiri collected by Ch. Monteil, Monographie de Djenné /Monograph of Djenne/, pp. 137-138; L. Tauxier. La Religion Bambara, pp. 195-208.

[787 361] Generally the place is pointed out by the geomancer at the time the village is founded, or else determined by an event which occurred at that time. It is after this operation that the buildings are erected to the west of the chosen spot.

If the dasiri is a tree, no one may burn or cut its branches. In [822] many cases it cannot be approached by anyone dressed in black or indigo, colors which represent obscurity. No Peul may sit in its [563] shade (2). Any infraction of these taboos brings about the death of

2. The reasons for the taboo concerning the Peul have not yet been ascertained.

794 778 532 high forehead, black and always smeared with karite butter, confers upon the face a beneficial power. The whole mask is regularly rubbed with ground charcoal powder and with the juice of the kola nut.

794 778 The whips of the mask (ndomo busa) are made of ñuana branches famous for their suppleness. They are made at the time of the annual ceremony and only renewed the following year. At the time of their manufacture, they are soaked in water, which the members of the society then drink "in order not to have to suffer from the blows which they will receive."

[824] Each member also possesses a long whip made of the branches of a bush, the ngere ni, (1) which is also called "tree of Faro" for it

1. Hibiscus pandoriformia.

grows in water, and which contains part of the beneficial power of the spirit. The whip is used to try out the children's courage. The one who cries or complains will carry this handicap with him through life; even after his circumcision he will be referred to as a coward.

B. Initiation

794 526 Each new grade is acquired in the course of the annual ceremony which takes place after the harvest. An elder entrusted with the sacrifices cuts the throats of the roosters offered by the postulants over the tree of the ndomo (Pl. V, a) and over the ritual objects placed at his feet, and then pours boiled millet as an offering. During this time the young people plow the ground where the contest, bari (2), is to take place; this fight will pit them against each other

2. To make oneself fall, the joust.

and give them the opportunity to show their courage and competitive spirit.

The chief designates the fighters two by two who are watched over /173/ by the dyolokotigi. In the contest, during which any use of legs or feet disqualifies the fighter, the one who makes his adversary fall three consecutive times is chosen to be initiated into a higher grade on the following night. After this contest, the losers must bring two additional roosters if they also wish to be initiated. Then a meal eaten in common brings together the members of the society and the postulants.

844 273 271 contact with water which symbolizes "the victory of Faro over Mousso Koroni in the matter of family names" is a prefiguration of name-giving.

851 As soon as the patriarch hears of the birth, he comes and shakes the family pembele over the child's head, three or four times according to the sex, in order to pass on to him the nyama and the qualities of the deceased person from whom he has inherited the ni and the dya. Then, he brings the family altar kere la boli ni into the house of the woman who has just given birth and places it before him. Crouching upon the ground, with fingers spread over the object, he pronounces the following prayer: "You, boli, make me a chief, so that my family prospers, a child is /178/ born, his soul is entrusted to you; I invoke you, boli, night and day" (1).

1. Boli tigi i ka masaya kanu ñe, de wolo la, a ni kalifa be i la, ngo boli ßu ani kle.

Holding the child on his knees, he places the object on its chest for three consecutive times. Repeating the prayer, he next cuts the throat of a red rooster over the open sac, dips the right index into the blood, and, depending upon whether it is a boy or a girl, makes three or four crosses on the forehead of the newborn who thus becomes the "son of the boli," boli dɛ̃.

A white sea shell, krokrodya (2), is placed before the newborn

2. Cardita vingens.

and gently moved about to "condense his dya within him." Then it is tied to the child's foot for three or four days according to its sex. 846 824 751 At the same time, the mother who is entrusted with the child's dya until the name-giving ritual, adorns herself during the eight days following the birth with a collar (madya, "dya of the person") made from the odoriferous root of the tree bearing the same name. She will wear it until the child takes its first steps so as to protect it and to recall that she herself carried the soul of the newborn.

553 852 The name is given on the eighth day by the chief of the Komo. Under the dubale, a tree which shelters the village meetings, the elders assemble around the Komo altars which have been carried to the spot (3). If it is a first son, the father gives one hundred kola nuts,

769 At an annual ceremony presided over by the Komo, the members assemble in honor of thedead. It is called su sɔ̀ sibiri, "Saturday of the sacrifice to the dead" and is celebrated on a Saturday at the time when the ears are being formed in the millet fields.

The kotigi removes the ancestral tools from their shelter and carries them to the graves. Then the chief of the Komo and his assistants, accompanied by the maskers, carry the altars to the cemetery while singing. Each grave is put for a moment into contact with the nimara boli and the nyama boli; the exuviae of the souls of the dead each visit the bodies they once animated. To the rhythm su bara, "rhythm of the dead," played on the drums, the maskers dance and sing around the graves while mock labor is carried out with each of the ancestral tools. During the whole ceremony the kinsmen wail, the men near the graves and the women in the house. A victim is sacrificed, cut up, and cooked in new pots which are broken after they have been used in order to avoid the contagion of the nyama of the dead. The dances of the maskers are performed during the two days that follow. In some villages the ceremony is repeated after the harvest has been threshed.

Exceptional Cases

The Stillborn

845 783 It is said of a stillborn child that he has lost both his soul and his double, that is to say, his complete being. The parents who are responsible to Faro for this disaster are obliged to find and recapture the spiritual elements of their child, the woman the soul, and the man the double, in the course of long and sometimes painful rituals.

As soon as the woman is able to go out after the birth, both parents are led, shaved and naked, before the members of the family assembled in the courtyard. As testimony /197/ of the deceased to Faro, their hair, mixed with that of the child, is buried in the wall of their home. Then a tomato, representing the foetus, is introduced into [824] a large incision made in the woman's thigh. The man crouches and drinks the juice which drips from the fruit and which symbolizes the double. Each one bows before the elders of the family, holding their hands behind their backs, to apologize for the fault committed, saying: "Here is my humiliated (sex) behind me" (1).

Death at War

727 When a warrior returns home in good health after a battle, the sacrificer or the village chief orders the performance of the ni yere klo, "game of the vibration of the soul," to celebrate his return. Men and women gather in the village square to sing: "The soul is come, the light of the soul is come, the drum of the soul will be played for it" (1). Next they form a circle and turning first in one direction and then

1. Ni nana, ni yelengu nana, ni dunu na fo o la.

in the other, throw a little water on the head of the individual concerned, thus "refreshing his soul."

766 When a man dies at war, the rituals whose object he becomes bring into play the nyama boli of the Komo, the altar dedicated to the conservation of the souls of those who die a vilent death.

In former times the stone which had mortally hit a warrior was carefully kept. The corpse was washed /200/ on cowries and on stones used for slings because its nyama, which impregnated them, made them more efficient in killing. The body was also transported to the exit of the village where each villager offered cowrie shells while he pronounced the name of the victim. Then it was swung three times in the direction of the village, first feet forward and next head forward. After all the villagers had retired to their homes, the Komo was brought out. The stone that had killed the man was struck to call forth his soul; then it was rubbed on the nyama boli to make the soul penetrate the altar. A dance was held with the altar, and the body [824] was buried and covered with fresh branches of ngamyã (2). The grave was watered to "refresh the dead man" while the chief

2. Celtis integrifolia.

was watered to "refresh the dead man" while the chief of the Komo made sacrifices over the nyama and the nimara boli.

Death Away from Home

766 167 The necessity of performing the rituals as well as their detailed quality are such that a Bambara is always advised against expatriation.

776 latter animal which is imitated by the vukuri during the children's
825 nocturnal ritual described on page 65.

This new information confirms the observations noted on page 47, footnote 1, concerning the identity of the Bambara and Dogon representations. Moreover, the warableni, like the yurugu (Vulpes pallida) of the Dogon, intervenes in divination, particularly in geomancy. The investigations permit the extension of these representations to Sudanese tribes coming from Mandé (see p. 2), particularly, to the Bozo and the Peul.

Chapter 3

826 All Sudanese peoples originating in Mandé are characterized by the
773 seeds (or fish) contained in their collarbone, these varying from one
824 tribe to another. On the other hand, within a tribe, the theoretical content of the eight seeds, though roughly similar in terminology, differs in arrangement from family to family. Also the positions of the first and last seeds are reversed for men and women. Example: the blacksmiths have as their first seed the keninge and as their last the tikaninkuru, whereas the potters have as their first seed the tikaninkuru which they cultivate in the sacred fields (see p. 170) and as their last the keninge.

Moreover, after Mousso Koroni had stolen from Pemba the seeds he was entrusted to give on earth, Faro, through the intermediary of the /232/ animals who ate them at his order, reclaimed them from her; thus purified, he distributed them to men. The animal, which brought back to Faro the essential seed of each family, becomes the taboo, tne, of the family concerned, and the breaking of this taboo has the basic effect of removing the content of the culprit's collarbone. Analogous representations are noted among the Dogon.

Totemism, the so called "joking relationship" (senankuya of the Bambara), the caste system, and the exogamous laws of the Sudanese are based on the elements and classification of the contents of the collarbone.

Chapter 6

794 All the great adult institutions (dyo) are in contact with the
857 children's society of the Ndomo which reflects the universal organization
773

763 A gunshot today most likely signals the death of a hunter or the father of a hunter. In any case, however, there are always cries and vociferations by [165] the women, who are joined by their friends, relatives, and neighbors.

Horsemen ride off to notify any of the sons of the deceased who are away.

[567] Meanwhile, the chief of the slaves, the major-domo, the confidential agent, or a friend or neighbor of the deceased goes to inform the chief and the principal men in the village.

764 These personages come to the mortuary house at once, spear in hand. After being received by the man temporarily in charge of the house, they go to the deceased to discover his identity and at the same time express their condolences to the family represented by the person who received them; then they withdraw.

In the mortuary hut silence descends while the women prepare the body. They wash it with warm water usually [824] scented with basil, su-ko-la (Ocimum album and febrifugum); they dry it and wrap it in pieces of native white cotton material or else dress it in its own garments, likewise white. A mat [285] of coarse straw (tyekala, kara) is placed in the middle of the room. A fine, flexible mat made of iphène leaves is put on top of it, and the women lay out the corpse on the second mat. Sometimes they place a grindstone on the abdomen to keep it from swelling.

When these preparations are completed, the women, [352 516] dressed in white native cloth, sit down in the native fashion on tiny stools in the mortuary hut. Those who come in from outside give evidence of terrible grief: they cry out, they weep, [152] they cover their heads with a bit of cloth and hurry toward the mortuary hut. As soon as they enter, they become quiet and stop weeping.

152 764 767 Among the Bambara grief is never silent; it is customary to show it overtly. As soon as there is a crowd, the singing begins, in rhythm to the clapping of hands. One person or another will be inspired to sing of the achievements and virtues of the deceased. Professional weepers and mourners mingle with the crowd, guiding and gradually encouraging the noisy display.

764 period is sometimes reduced to three days, but a week conforms more to custom, as is shown by the Ségou chronicle cited earlier.

All this takes place "at the door of the dead," at the blon'-da, as the natives call it, that is, at the very place where the elder was wont to sit and where offerings were made to the ancestors. It is believed that the soul of the departed is there and will be gratified amidst this abundance honoring him and testifying to his kindness and also to his power. In the minds of the Bambara these repasts of communion form a very strong bond among those who partake of them. The act of eating consecrated food together is a kind of sacrament which binds the participants to mutual aid. A traitor is doomed to be cursed by the manes.

Magic, of course, can free a person from these bonds and even enable him to profit from these funeral gatherings to further the most nefarious schemes, but that does not alter the concepts on which the dyansa and the sanga-fo are based.

765 783 [824] (d) Mourning. The purification of the hut of the deceased takes place on the eighth day. Women pulverize tree bark -- from the cailcedra (2) especially -- put it in water,

2. Khaya senegalensis.

and sprinkle this liquid about the hut which they then sweep.

They assemble with native brooms, sing, and do a kind of dance step; they collect the dirt and throw it away at a crossroads outside the village (3). The hut may then be re-

3. Preferably at the main crossroads (da-n-kun'-ba-la).

occupied. [172]

765 514 During the eight days following the burial, the daughters of the fa live together in strict seclusion. They spend their days in the blon', where they spin cotton and take their meals. To take care of their natural needs, they go out only in a body;

794 796 539 way to this child, the way which the village follows."

One by one they pass before the wara-da who, dressed in full regalia, is supposed to receive their oath. The oracle places the tube with the horn on each boy's head in turn, and the following dialogue takes place:

--Mun' b'i kun' (What is it you have on your head?), asks the oracle.

A kala be n kun' (I have his symbol (2) on my head).[274]

2. Kala, literally, is the cylindrical part of a thing; here, in the special language, it is a way of alluding to the tube with its horn and thus is a kind of symbol of the Komo.

I y'a ye wa (Have you seen it [the Komo])?

Ne m'a ye (No, I have not seen it).

I y'a fo ma min'ye, k'i kun' ti ki' son' n'i bien' ta a k'ifa (If you speak of it to anyone, may it [the Komo] smash your head and may it [the Komo] take your heart and your liver and kill you).

A ka ne fa (May it kill me).

I sirila nyama-n-fu dyala la (You are bound by the bark thong of the nyama) (1).

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1. An allusion to the strips of bark from the nyama tree (Bauhinia reticulata), which make up the common costume for concealing the officiants during the ceremonies. It is simply a way of saying: "Do you agree to join?" And the reply is equivalent to: "Yes, for as long as I shall live."

Ne si sirila a la (My life is bound by this thong).

Ni si m'a fo ma si ye, Komo k'i kisi (If you speak to no one about all this, may the Komo protect you [literally, "save you"]).

A ka ne kisi (May he protect me).

241 may be set too early, and no amount of advice to be patient will retard it. However, for the millets, fonio, and rice, the visible characters of ripeness are known and respected (opening of the husk in the case of millet, color and bowing of the spike in the case of fonio and rice).

242 824 When a field is exhausted, it is allowed to lie fallow, and another terrain is cleared of brush, sometimes several kilometers from the village. A field is recognized as being exhausted when a variety of plant known as sege (Striga senegalensis Benth) appears spontaneously; when the soil is reconstituted and regains its richness, tiekala (Cymbopogon giganteus Benth) and wägha (Andropogon Gayanus Kunth) appear, which indicates that the field may again be cultivated. Thus, the fields are rotated around the village that cultivates them, 342 following a cycle which may last 20 years. Temporary dwellings are set up near the fields under cultivation, and the farmer lives there during the work with each of his wives in turn.

[29] B. Food Crops

243 The Bambara cultivate food plants and textile plants. Millet is the basic crop in the savanna. The pénicillaires, small millet (Pennisetum typhoïdeum R.), are cultivated very far north. Their types are characterized by the length of their vegetative cycles, which vary from 65 to 140 days. In general, they are sown in a rather light soil at the beginning of the rainy season. The grain is put in the ground, without preliminary working of the soil, in holes one pace apart and a few centimeters deep. A pinch of seed is put in each hole, and one to three subsequent workings are given the soil; the first, 15 days after reaping, the others in July and August. The yield varies from 350 to 1,000 kilograms per hectare.

The sorghums (Sorghum vulgare) include a considerable number of varieties with vegetative cycles varying from 120 to 150 days. M. Vichon has collected 11 samples of sugar sorghums, 132 of late mid-season, 87 early, 138 of transplants. M. Creak divides the sorghums into three types: with full, compact, conical spikes; with elongated spikes and more detached spikelets; with very elongated spikes and with spikelets even more detached from the axis. A third

622 gives the orders concerning local celebrations and initiations.

In fact, the land originally belongs to spirits, and the chief 622 who succeeds the founder of the village is the only one who is able 776 to establish contact with the chief of the spirits and negotiate with him. He is the earthly administrator of the spirit; he assures his worship, the exploitation of the land, and the organization of the community territory.

621 The first chief of the land was the first occupant; the suc- 622 ceeding chiefs are his heirs, following the order of succession. To found a new village, a chief chooses a place in unoccupied territory, usually at a crossroads, near a water source, near a baobab, [718 a doubalé, or other sacred tree. He offers sacrifices to the spirits 824] and receives in exchange their authorization to settle. If his group prospers, and less fortunate families want to establish themselves in this well-favored location, they ask the chief for authorization. However, as Monteil (1) remarks: "... The fa of a familial community depends strictly on the patriarchy only if, attached to it by the male line, he holds some goods of the patriarchy or if he claims rights in this patriarchy. In the contrary case, the family fa conducts himself as a stranger in relation to the patriarchy, which can only treat him in like fashion ..." Every familial community becomes patriarchal at the death of the family head when he has no heirs (see the chapter on inheritance); the community then groups around itself familial communities which themselves include paternally related groups and maternally related groups. When the patriarchy is an old one, a considerable number of persons live under its aegis. All recognize dyamu and taboos (see below) in common.

1. Monteil, Les Bambara du Ségou et du Kaarta [The Bambara of Ségou and Kaarta].

621 When the settlement becomes too populous, a fa gathers a 631 group and founds another village. Afterwards, the people of neighboring districts may solicit the patronage of the first village, by participating in its djo (2) and by sacrificing to its guardian spirits.

2. See the chapter on religion.

561 and religious life). The young men of the same soli form what is called a flambolo. Three consecutive classes of flambolo form a flanton. The women have a parallel organization. Each fulani is a ton-den (child of the ton), with a corresponding association.

561 241 476 The association's role, apart from the seasonal celebrations and the copious feasts, accompanied by a great deal of drinking, is that of a mutual aid society and of a veritable village work cooperative. It is organized, administered, and articulated with a view to the agricultural work. The chief, kariku, expedites current business, with the assistance of a syere (witness, deputy). He has a treasurer who receives offerings and makes payments, the femmaraba (he who preserves things), plus an honorary president and an adviser, chosen from among the notables and delegated by them; he must supervise the society and orient its activities.

This social organism rests, in the last analysis, on the exchanges of services initiated and supported by the kariku. He sees to it that help is forthcoming to a man making the customary work payments in the fields of his parents-in-law or future parents-in-law (in exchange for food and drink furnished by the parents-in-law to these ton-den). In like manner, a farmer asks the kariku for help in clearing a field of brush. This request is made through an intermediary or a senanku who [58] accompanies the request with ten kola nuts. The chief accepts the present and calls his council into session to study the affair technically and to fix the salary. The same procedure is followed for the winter weeding, which calls for rapid completion, as well as for building dams, irrigating canals, paths, roads suitable for carting, etc.

[43] [824]

An analogous system exists for the female kari, for sowing the crops as well as for gathering the harvest, mutual domestic aid, etc. The two groups collaborate for the seasonal celebrations.

643 d. The Fama. -- We see that the canton is a grouping formed under the authority and influence of a dominant family. Its unity is determined by political, social, and religious laws which regulate it. The fa or head of the dominant family becomes the Fama, that is, the patriarch, chief of the canton. He then often renounces the administration of the faya, which he turns over to his second (syere),

776 time; it is the noblest work, and one to which every member of the Bambara race must be subject. Faro is represented by a spiral, munu; the vibrating movements of the spiral are the same that animate the daily movements of the sun. These movements are materialized in a basket-work headdress, yugu, which has eight whorls and which formerly was reserved for kings. Faro's face is white, because he took it from the spirit of the air, Teliko, who was an albino. His ears are protected by two fins; his hands are of different sex; his tail is palmate, and his breast is of copper. Albinos and copper are the spirit's preferred sacrifices. All atmospheric manifestations denote his presence; his principal seat is the Niger River, but he has the gift of ubiquity and haunts all waters. Faro is accompanied by helpers, the most representative of whom is the bolokuruni, one-armed blacksmith of a black race. His air messenger is the swallow, who carries the
[824] fertilizing word. Certain plants are in permanent rapport with him: the Yayalẽ, the Ngoyõ (tomato), which is compared to blood. Thus, small fields of tomatoes reserved for the cult of Faro are cultivated in each village. All metals are reserved for Faro. The Bozo, born of Faro's first twins, enjoy a privileged position because they were not subject to the defilement caused by Mousso Koroni and can enter into direct communication with the spirit. In addition, they are the masters of the water.

776 The cult of Faro includes a whole series of taboos, such as the
784 black earth of the river which may not be used by the potters and
841 butter which may not be kept in water. But the principal taboo is menstrual blood, originally provoked by the disorders of Mousso Koroni.

B. Conception of Man

774 The Bambara conceive man as a microcosm, a resumé of the
761 totality of beings and things. The principle of duality contained in the original creative thought is realized in man by his twin souls which compensate for the separation of the sexes. In man, Faro is represented by the ni (soul) and the dya (double). Pemba is represented by the téré (the character, force, and conscience) and the nyama (which is the téré when it leaves its corporeal support after
[826] death). Mousso Koroni is represented by the Wanzo (evil force with

physical male factor residing in the clitoris. The operation takes place, moreover, during the same period as the circumcision. It is carried out by the potteress, wife of the blacksmith, in full daylight before the assembled kin. During their seclusion the girls wear a white veil which plays the same role as the bonnet of the circumcised. Instead of the sistrum, the girls shake a gourd which contains eight millet seeds and cotton fibers which their fiancés have given them. A goat is sacrificed for the ceremony. The collected blood is given to the fiancé in honor of his ancestors who become those of the girl.

[93] On the last day of the ceremony the girls definitively rid themselves of their wanzo by jumping over a pyre composed of the clothes and scraps of the excised.

e. Marriage

It is only after having been circumcised or excised that young people may marry. The institution of marriage is regulated by a ritual which has often been described, particularly by Amar, Monteil, Tauxier, Aubert . . .

The marriage arrangements are made by the respective fa of the two betrothed, after the young people have been consulted. The request is officially made to the parents by an intermediary, a man of caste or a sénanku. It is accompanied by ritual gifts offered to the fa of the girl. In the Bougouni region the request is accompanied by ten kola nuts, because ten is a complete number that designates good events and future births. (Nine kola nuts are offered to present condolences, four as a sign of greeting. To send three nuts would be insulting, and 19 nuts, marking incompleteness, would be a sign of lack of confidence.) The first kola nuts to be offered are always wrapped in one or two karite leaves, symbol of life and of fecundity. If the ten kola nuts are accepted, it means that the father has opened the way to the marriage. The intermediary then make a second trip the following week, bringing a cock for sacrifice to the ancestors and ten more kola nuts; during a third trip he offers another cock and ten more kola nuts before the entire assembled family of the young girl, witnessing that the girl may meet her fiancé. In the course of the fourth trip, the intermediary leads the girl to the fiancé's family, where she will be confided to the wife of the head of the family who will undertake her education.

BA
773 tools and the throwing weapon were made. Then, unfired pottery and weaving were invented; and men finally came to know stone tools, iron and the forge. The technique of making dwellings seems to have developed more slowly.

a. Fishing

BA
Bo
226
463 Side by side with populations who specialize in the art of fish-
564 ing, such as the Bozo or the Somono caste, all the Bambara fish in the [96] rivers or watercourses in the neighborhood of their dwellings. A detailed study has been made by J. Daget (1). The Somono, who

1. Jacques Daget, "La pêche dans le delta central du Niger" [Fishing in the Central Delta of the Niger], Journal de la Société des Africanistes, Vol. XIX (1949), No. 1.

are the caste of Bambara fishermen, use traps and nets for fishing; the Bozo remain faithful rather to harpoons and small nets. They are
BA the ones who almost always make the pirogues, for they alone may
Bo enter in rapport with the spirit of the water, Faro. The nets are of
286 knotted mesh made with a weaver's shuttle, sia, and a cylindrical
227 mold, pako. The band of the net, as it is being made, is nearly always attached to a wooden bridge especially conceived for this purpose, the kale or dio soyo kala, a regular tetrahedron whose edges
● BA are about 20 centimeters long, one of which is prolonged by a handle
Bo 1.50 meters long. The fisherman, seated on the ground, puts the
[283 bridge before him, keeping the handle close to his leg. The fibers
●824 used in netmaking are da (Hibiscus cannabinus), kie (Figna unguiculata), cotton, and now European thread.

Bo The Bozo construct weirs from cut and joined tree branches;
226 the weirs assume several different forms according to the regions and
Bo the snares used. Fish are used for human consumption; they are eaten
BA fresh, grilled, fried or boiled, or preserved by smoking or drying. Oil,
251 used for cooking and as a lubricant, is extracted from certain fish,
252 such as the tineni.

BA Fishing in Bambara villages is done communally under the
226 direction of a fishing chief at the time the waters recede. Precise rules of fishing rights and of rents due the masters of the waters are respected everywhere.

412 831 the peasant digs with the male hoe and covers with the female hoe; the work done with the female double of the peasant and the male double of the wife symbolizes the sexual union. (1)

1. M. Griaule and G. Dieterlen, "L'agriculture des Bozo," [Bozo Agriculture] Journal des Africanistes [Ed., Journal de la Societe des Africanistes, 1949.]

d. Basketry

285 Basketry is done by everyone, men and women; it plays a large part in the construction and furnishing of the house. Sometimes the lofts are immense baskets, woven on the diagonal. In certain regions a great mat is wrapped around the exterior wall of the round hut. The doors of mud huts are often coarse mats woven diagonally [531] which are placed before the opening. But much finer mats, made from fibers of different colors and with geometric designs with a symbolic meaning, cover the ground for sitting or sleeping.

e. Weaving, Clothes, Ornaments

291 The first article of clothing was the fiber skirt made from the [824] nyama (Bauhinia reticulata, or Bauhinia thonningii) and the covering for the sexual parts which are still worn during religious ceremonies.

[773] Mythology designates cotton as the first fiber to be woven.

286 Weaving is one of the most widespread techniques. Cotton, spun by the women, is woven by the men, in olden times by the captives, who work in the open air near the huts, in the shade of trees in the courtyards or in the public places. A primitive loom made of four vertical wooden parts connected by horizontal shafts and driven by pedals weaves long bands. The warp and woof form a ground stich and symbolize a being of intelligence and eloquence. Moreover, a science of the bands exists which is based on the symbolism of colors, designs, and numbers.

822 The Bambara distinguish three fundamental colors: white, red, and black. Each of these three tints has its history and its role

342 shovel. A coping of bricks is then laid out around the roof, leaving room for the gutters which spill into the streets. These houses may be topped with a second roof, a thatched cone. The four chief timbers are set at the four angles of the house. There is a door in the first ceiling, and precious goods or objects are kept in this part of the house. As in the round huts, the door always opens to the south.

The outside of the houses are plastered with earth mixed with [237] cow dung; on the inside, the floor and lower part of the walls are daubed with black earth mixed with fresh cow manure and bark from [824] the jumbo tree (Napoleona Heudelotii); the upper walls and the ceiling are covered with white river clay. Where the two colors meet, [531] lines of festoons traced with the finger symbolize the descent of the third Word. On the white walls are painted ladders, calabash spoons, animsla, signs conveying [102] the worldly situation of the owner as well as the soul of the artist.

[356] The periphery of the entrance door is daubed with fresh cow [769] dung every 15 days, and more liberally with rotted cow dung once a year before the rains. This custom is linked to ancestor worship.

Canari [earthenware vessels] containing certain plants are 353 buried under the bed of the head of the family; other plants and 352 juice from roots are hidden under the women's beds. The boli are hooked to the roofing of the houses for they must touch neither earth, water, nor fire. Nets, diakumadjulu, are hung from the ceiling; they hold clothes or calabashes for the food; mats or animal skins are spread on the ground; beds, different-sized calabashes, and stools complete the furnishings. The different huts belonging to one family 351 are surrounded by a wall that opens into the vestibule of a hut with 342 two doors, oriented north-south. This is where the head of the family receives strangers. In the inside court are found hearths made [354] of three stones, mortars for millet, and chicken coops, a sort of small square hut made of clay mixed with straw. The granaries, 343 constructed on piles, have the form of round huts. They are divided 25] into four parts, where the four principal grains are kept: millet, rice, fonio, ground nuts. Some grains may be kept together in the same compartment, for example, millet and ground nuts. Certain granaries, bonio, are veritable cigar-shaped pots made by the blacksmiths' wives. When the bonio is finished, it is cut into sections

825 village, I thought at first that here lay the reason for this rest, extraor-
787 dinary during the time of the most intensive hoeing. Not at all; the
pagan Bambara were resting, and the women were giving their hus-
[262] bands and children dégé (millet flour mixed with milk and honey
water) in obedience to a hyena's command. The hyena, it was said
-- and all the sorcerers confirmed this -- had emerged from its dumb-
ness, its tongue had been loosed, and it had predicted to the people
of the west that a plague even more terrible than that of the cater-
pillars would descend on the country. Only one means to avert it
remained: to refrain from going to the fields on Friday and to treat
themselves to dégé, the food so dear to Moslems.

482 On my excursions I have often met men and women carrying
757 on their heads a gourd or a basket containing a handful of leaves or
824 some bundles of roots, and apart from the customary greetings it
784 has been impossible for me to get a word out of them. And why this
silence? They were carrying a medicinal plant, a remedy which
would lose all its virtue and all its efficacy if they conversed on the
way, and they had to take care not to trample such-and-such a plant
that grew on the edge of the path.

757 The Bambara quite readily names the plants and herbs whose
753 curative powers are known to him, and yet in the presence of a sick
784 person he will very seldom give you the name of the remedy the
latter is taking, or the names of the roots and leaves that make up
his poultices. Sickness, he believes is a force, a power which tortures
our bodies. He is afraid that in naming the remedy he would pro-
vide this power with a weapon against its healing virtue, which is
another force or power. He sets the second power against the first
to make it leave.

811 It is evident that he attributes bits of reason and emotion to
784 everything, that he attributes human feelings to all that is animate
and inanimate. The "taboos" are not merely one piece of evidence
of this, they are an irrefutable proof of this attitude.

794
789

and metamorphoses. Although I have no precise data, this coincidence leads me to think that the same is true of cannibals of the Ubangi.

782 To be convinced one need only be present at the sacrifices; no matter whether the offering is to the djiné genii, the boli genii, or to the shades of ancestors, there recurs, always, the phrase: "Deliver us from the souba and the gné-fla." One of the chief functions of the boli fetishes is just this, and there are some whose special and primary role is to make war against the Siri genii. One of these fetishes is the Nama, a powerful boli which is greatly honored, venerated, and, I should say, fashionable in the Ségou circle and among all Mande peoples. The Ngouansa, known especially in the Worodougou, is also said to specialize in this sphere. From time to time it makes its appearance in the Ségou circle, and its owner without fail does his bit of business and fills his purse. People run to him from all sides bringing hens, goats, and kola nuts, and I have seen these Ngouansa tigi, or masters of a Ngouansa, red with blood after spending the entire morning sacrificing. Before cutting their victims' throats, they stand, facing east with arms akimbo, and shout at the tops of their voices: "Souba, you are dogs, you are even less, the excrements of dogs, oubou bo."

791 Would the name of the souba and the gné-fla be heard so often
85 from the lips of the Negroes, would families, villages, and sects /41/
●824 spill so much blood or offer so many kola nuts, if they did not sincerely believe in them? Not only do they find an irrefutable proof of the possibility of metamorphosis in the fact that the caterpillar turns into a chrysalis which becomes a butterfly, they will also tell you that the winged termite, "that short-lived creature which on winter evenings comes in swarms around the lights, scattering wings everywhere, in the soup and on the plates," buries itself in the ground, swells like a sorghum seed, grows roots, and becomes a graceful shrub and then a beautiful tree provided it is spared by fire. I do not know the scientific name of this shrub or tree, but the Negroes call it sandéré.

782 the meat and eat it on the spot. When a saraka is given, barring a very special order by the sorcerer, meats, millet flour, kola nuts, and cowrie shells are left on the spot, and only the poor may take and eat them. Most frequently, the children of both sexes are called, and it is they who devour the meats and the flour. As soon as this food has been received, the leftovers are gathered and placed in a corner formed by two paths that meet or cross. When a saraka is offered by the whole village, a goat is almost always slaughtered, and the skin, folded in four or six ply, is tied with gnama fou (1), and then hung

●[824] 1. Bouhinia reticulata, commonly called "tree of Judea."

on the end of a pole at the entrance of the village.

A saraka is never given to the boli fetishes; it is given to djiné fetishes and to God. It may, or may not, involve bloodshed, and it may be given directly or indirectly. A direct saraka can be given by anyone, and by either a man or a woman; they need only be circumcised or excised, depending on their sex. But to offer a saraka, indirectly through the mediation of a djiné genie or of a boli (a boli is never intermediary in a saraka given to God), the owners and sacrificers of the djiné and boli genii must officiate, for they alone have the privilege of speaking and appealing directly to these gods. In saraka of this sort two simultaneous and distinct acts are always performed; in the case of a saraka involving bloodshed there is no doubt on this subject. The saraka animal has its throat cut in front of the fetish chosen as intermediary, and this fetish takes the responsibility of telling the rightful one that this slaughtering was done as a tribute or tax presented to him. And this procedure is in no way illogical, for it is not at all the flesh and bones of the animal that are given to the invisible being; it is the animal's life, the blood which contains its ni, or life. Two things are given in a saraka -- the material and the immaterial, and when it is indirect /66/ blood must necessarily be spilled for the benefit of the mediator, so that he can lay hands on the life of the animal given in tribute and offer it to the rightful one.

771 181 If the Bambara have fought to safeguard their independence, they have done so primarily to preserve their faith and keep their fetishes. They have shown such great attachment for these, that their [101] conquerors have described them as rebels and applied to them the epithet Bamba, synonym of Kafri. These religious struggles in themselves allow us to state as an indisputable fact that before the arrival of the Moslems the Bambara were animistic and sacrificed to genii. /69/

776 811 Did they have an exact and precise idea of their genii as they do now? Apparently yes, for they always reasoned using themselves as a basis of comparison so that in their minds the invisible, impalpable genii to whom they sacrificed had a striking resemblance to man. It is not a man, and yet it is one, they say unable to define their concept or idea, ma si fa do (1).

1. Ma; "man"; si fa' "certain kind"; do; "it is."

776 782 The Moslem word djin translates this idea precisely, and the Bambara use it in everyday language; but when the day of the sacrifice comes, they become unaware of it and there remains only one word -- ma, meaning "man." When they redden with blood the bark of [824] the baobab (Adansonia digitata), the tamarind tree, the false cedar (family of the cedrelaceae), etc., to obtain the good graces and protection of the genie who dwells there, they always confer on it the title ma ("man"), and never that of djiné. "Ma n'zira ba, ma n'tomi ba, ma djala ba; O great baobab man, O great tamarind tree man, O great false-cedar man!" begins the formula used by the sacrificer in offering victims and millet flour to the genie (2). They also have

114 2. In /J. Henry/, "Culte des esprits chez les Bambara /Spirit Worship among the Bambara/," Anthropos, Vol. III, No. 4 (1908), p. 1 /p. 702/, note 1, there is an error in translation.

776 risk of spoiling the crop -- o be gno soun tigné ("it destroys the vitality
241 of the seed of the millet grain").
782 These genii do not have special festivals in the course of the year. Their priests, the heads of families, offer them saraka and sacrifices at planting time, and some of them sacrifice a hen in the corner of the field while the crop is sprouting and growing, but that is all.

6. Genii Protectors of Children

89 It is not until circumcision that Bambara children take part in
794 the mysteries of pagan worship, but they are early prepared for it so
776 that they may be introduced to the law of secrecy which they must strictly adhere to later when they are initiates of an occult sect. At about the age of seven or eight years, they become affiliated with an association worshipping the genii responsible for protecting them. All these sects are alike, differing only in name. On the banks of the
[325] Bani and the Niger, the object of worship is the tauri (toad or frog), and the croaking of this animal is imitated in their festivals; some villages have the djara (lion) and imitate its roar by whirling their
[334] slingshots, small boards four fingers wide and one to two centimeters long, attached to the end of a string. The most widespread /children's
[84] genie/ is n'tomo, which undoubtedly gets its name from the tree in which it lives (the /92/ jujube tree, n'tomo). It makes children hale and hearty, preserves them from sickness, defends them against the invisible little creatures of the bush, against spells and sorcery, and makes them strong, steadfast, and impervious to suffering.

The confraternity of the n'tomo is modeled after that of the boli. (This is true of both kinds -- for there are two; a white costume is worn to the dance for n'tomo djé and a black costume for n'tomo fign). In order to be admitted one must offer a hen to the child who is head of the n'tomo (the n'tomotigi), prostrate oneself before the tree of the genie, and swear to keep the secret and never to speak of the n'tomo to the uninitiated, especially not to little girls.

194 The to-n-dé, or members of the association, are formed into groups, each corresponding to a circumcision, and all these groups, united among themselves by a common bond, which is the worship to be rendered to the n'golo genie, submit to and obey the head, the n'golo tigi, preferably called to-n-tigi. Thanks to this unity, a host of quarrels and fights is avoided, and they all help each other, sharing in the joys and sorrows of their fellow members. In a word, this association corresponds, in miniature, to our societies of mutual assistance and help.

194 196 To get a girl of the moment, the young to-n-dé from time to time sacrifice a small pullet. But a big sacrifice is made yearly and the victim is at least a goat; it is offered in the name of all. The offering of the general sacrifice does not prevent each initiate from adding a hen and a kola nut; food abounds, millet beer flows in streams, the association furnishes food and drinks to the whole village and to friends from surrounding villages. On this day also the youths circumcised during the year enter the confraternity of the n'golo and become to-n-de, or members of the organization of the fla-n-to. To do so they must spend from 80 to 120 cowrie shells (2 to 3 sous) and offer to the fetish the hen and two kola nuts as a sacrifice.

8. The Women's Genie

196 ●234 Not all villages possess this fetish tree, which is called mouso ka djiri (2), but all hamlets have a genie whose chief function is to

2. This tree is often a fig tree called n'zoro or a toro sycamore (ficus vogeli, ficus ferruginosa). Mouso means "woman"; ka is particle indicating possession; djiri means "tree"; the whole phrase therefore means "the tree of the women."

preserve the freshness of youth in the ladies for a long time, to give mothers breasts that are loaded with /96/ milk, to bring fertility to the sterile, and finally to keep an eye on the periods, or menses, of each and every one. Every month at the new moon the excised women, married and unmarried, spend an entire night dancing in its honor, to the beat of a special drum called mouso denou (1). These dances

1. Mouso, "woman"; denou, "drum."

are not very decent, and except for some shameless individuals who watch even these scenes from the height of the flat terrace roofs, the men among the Bani stay at a distance.

Many villages (and they are numerous in Bani country) believe that the genie takes shelter in a fig tree near the walls and establishes its home there. It is the trunk of this tree that is reddened with blood at the annual festival, and most of the dances take place in its shade, as does the repast of which the Negro women partake on this occasion. The girls excised during the year spend 80 to 120 cowrie shells, offer a pullet for the sacrifice, and are thereafter permitted to pay their respects to the genie.

Out of this group of worshippers arises a small mutual aid society, identical in every way with the youth's association, the fla-n-to. The head of this organization is usually the oldest woman of the village, and she is given the title of massa, "queen." All the female population call her mba, "my mother."

This society, called mouso-n-to (2), from time to time offers

2. Mouso, "woman"; to, "gruel."

the people of the village d'lo, or millet beer, and once a year at the festival of the genie a plentiful repast with a dessert of kola nuts for the old and the usual drinking bout for everyone. Those who break the laws of the association are fined, and the sum of all these fines, together with the 80 or 120 cowrie shells spend by the excised girls of the year, help the massa and her associates to meet all expenses.

796 A great sacrifice to the spirit protector of the village, the
825 dasiri, is made every year. The spirit always has a mount such as
782 a snake, a rat, a lizard, a donkey, etc.; almost everywhere the mount is a terrible billy goat that roams through the village, enters everywhere, eats everything, and breaks everything without paying attention to the switch. For at least three days at the time of the sacrifice, the village makes merry; men, women, and children dance, stuff themselves with food, and drink and get drunk.

796 Just as everyone takes part in the feasting and drinking, so all
782 participate in the sacrifice, even the women, who at least go to the edge of the sacred grove, though they do not enter. And /101/ there is an abundance of everything: dégé, or /millet/ flour mixed with honey water and milk, d'lo, or millet beer, and finally meats. At least a goat, and sometimes a bull, is killed for the whole village, and the heads of families offer goats and hens, depending their wealth.

782 In addition to the sacrifices offered once a year and those offered
778 by a family when one of the children marries, the fetish receives
776 homage and tribute from just about everyone. Sterile women and those who habitually miscarry offer it many hens and fawn upon the animal that is its mount. If one gives birth to a baby, one consecrates it to the fetish, calling it dji-ri-ba ("great tree"), gnéna ma ké (gnéna, "genie"; ma, "man"; ké, "male"), or gnéna ma (gnéna, "genie"; ma, "man"). They even like to add the name of the village where the bountiful dasiri is found: Kolotomo gnéna ma (1), /102/

1. Kolotomo, the name of a village about 30 kilometers from Ségou; gnena, "genie"; ma, "man."

(man or daughter of the dasiri genie of Kolotomo). Actually, the name gnénama is given only to girls; for boys the word ké ("male") is added: gnénama-ké.

776 It is known through the mediation of sorcerers that a dasiri
778 sometimes leaves its sacred grove and its tree. This event is unusual;
824 the tree may fall from old age, but the sacrifices will be continued

776
778 on the stump, the open hole, or on the sprout that comes out of the
824 ground, grows, and replaces the tree.

776 Every dasiri has a sacred mount which bears its name and, as
778 I have already said, it seems to prefer a billy goat above all. The
825 latter dies of old age, that is, unless the good of the community dictates otherwise; I saw one perish in the prime of life because of

[778
824]

A dasiri fetish tree (of Songobougou).

its scandalous behavior; he was inordinately fond of the ewes of the village, which he mistook for goats, and this behavior was far too shameless for a sacred being.

776 The fetish protects the village by causing the evil spells and
778 sorcery cast on it to misfire. It defends the village against wicked
621 people and against its enemies, and thanks to it the inhabitants can
793 peacefully devote themselves to their work in the fields. While averting plagues and diseases which decimate the population, it gives strength, health, and vigor to all, and finally it populates the village by making the women fertile. Above all, it is the source of unity among families for it brings them all together under the authority of a single head; the friends of the head of the family whose name, or diamou, it bears, are its friends, and his enemies are also its own. To fail the priest, the gnéna-n-sonnaba, the dougoutigi, is to fail the fetish, so close and intimate is the union between the two.

11. The Koté, or Koré, Genie

794 Since it is the fundamental basis of power and authority, the
776 worship of the dasiri can, with some justice, be regarded as the first
778 and oldest of all Bambara religious practices. That of the koté, or koré, likewise seems to me quite respectable from this standpoint and just as old. As a matter of fact, this spirit, like the dasiri, lives in
● [824] a little grove near the village, and the three trees it likes to inhabit are the baobab, the false cedar, and the nettle tree.

794 The worship of the koré is especially popular in Bani country. Today not all the villages have the fetish, but all have at /103/ least a few initiates belonging to this semioccult sect. The sect includes women among its members; it is divided into eight groups, each ruled by its oldest member, who in turn is under the authority of the koretigi, the supreme head of the association.

794 At the time of the annual sacrifices, and especially at the
778 sacrifices made every seven years on the days of admission (for it is necessary to be a koré dé (1) in order to participate in the secret part

1. Koré, the fetish bearing this name; dé, "son."

178 534 the Nama are made of bamboo and smaller than those of the Komo. The big instrument here is the drum which is beaten with a bent iron rod. The syncopation is given on the bass drum which is wooden; the vibrations of the skins stop, and one would say that the sound is the knock of a bone that is broken clean; it gives one the shivers.

178 The Komo is always most carefully hidden, and one has to belong to the village to know in which hut it dwells. The main parts of the fetish are enclosed in baskets just like those used for transporting cotton, but three iron rods (3) on which /148/ sacrifices are made

> 3. In the presence of the uninitiated these sticks are called Komo djoloko, and (again so that none of the mysteries will be revealed) the warada, those who speak in the name of the idol, are called djoloko samana, "those who carry the chains of Komo."

are usually kept in the skin of a striped cat. The Nama lives under a tamarind tree outside the village and has a beehive for a tabernacle. [417] The whole thing is surrounded by a djasé, a kind of palisade made of coarse mats which hides from the uninitiated both the hive and the receptacle into which the remainder of the victims' blood is poured.

178 346 The Nia and the Wara, or Djara, have round huts surmounted by conical thatch roofs. While the first is inside the village, the second is always outside at one of the entrances. The Kono has a square house with a flat terrace roof. It is always decorated with small bells fastened by lines on which are hung skulls of dogs and goats that have been sacrificed. Usually, if not always, it faces the inside of the village. The Magna does not have a temple strictly speaking, but it has its altar, a round turret surmounted by a receptacle to receive the blood of victims. It is outside the village and always [824] under a silk-cotton tree (Eriodendron anfractuosum -- kapok tree).

178 The Komo is equipped with a jointed mask and a cloak made of feathers of guinea fowl, hens, etc., which are used for the sacred dance. By means of a stick which the feather cloak hides from sight,

764

4. Burials of the Circumcised, Old People, Heads of Families, Married and Unmarried Persons, Pregnant Women

Burials of the First Category, Those of Old People

[888] When I speak of old people I mean every Bambara (man or woman) who has grandchildren and so is a grandfather or grandmother. [224 575] When such an old person dies, gunpowder speaks and the shooting is even quite heavy if the deceased belongs to the association of hunters or there is an initiate of that sect (2) among his children. The chief

> 2. Hunters (douzo) all belong to a special sect. In order to enter it, a man must have passed his tests and killed a deer. The hunter has a special costume. See pp. 140 ff.

764 202 slave or, if there is none, a trusted man runs to notify the headman and his council, and all these dignitaries, spear in hand, come to verify the death and offer the /218/ first condolences to the family. Couriers at once go off in all directions to notify members of the family and friends. The person sent to married children is usually the one who was best man and sometimes the fourouboloma tigi (guardian of the wedding gifts) -- at the marriage. He carries out his mission with tact and delicacy. He first notifies the husband /of a daughter/ who summons his legal wife and orders her to go and take care of her father, who is seriously ill. So she leaves her house knowing nothing, and at least keeping a remnant of hope in her heart. It is only when she is on the way that she learns the sad news.

764 [84] While everyone is running right and left, the women wash the body with an aromatic plant called sou kola (1). They dress it in

> 1. Basil, a labiata, ocymum album and febrifugum.

761 on the branches of the sacred tree under which the fetish dwells and
782 at the door of its temple, and the members of its staff know how to
764 extol their god. Under these conditions they are without pity; they
778 bleed the bereaved family white, so that the tax demanded by our
circle officers (2) is nothing compared to the tax that they have to

[651]

2. The head tax is 3. 50 francs per person and 5 francs for the servants of Europeans. Here France is surely not a "tyrant, " but a tender mother.

pay. /227/

782 What do they not have to give for a sacrifice to the Komo, for
764 example? The whole house is turned upside down to find goats, dogs,
[824] kola nuts, roosters, and hens, gnâma-n-kou (Amormum melegueta), and djalakouma (a plant whose name I do not know). The family needs all this, cost what it may, and if they have to buy it all they have to pay double or triple the value of the objects, for others make profits from their necessity. First a dog or a goat is sacrificed to appease the fetish and pay respects to it. Then to find out whether it is satisfied and its hatred assuaged, two red roosters and two hens with golden necks bite the dust. A bara (1) (gourd) full of gnâma-n-

[415 824]

1. This bara (a large pumpkin /courge/ with a small opening at the top) can hold from 18 to 20 liters of liquid. The true gourd is half of a pumpkin.

kou fruit and another full of djalakouma are offered. One portion of these fruits is used for holy water (2); the other is sold for the benefit

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2. The holy water of the Komo is made of roots and leaves of the djalakouma and the fruit of the

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gnâma-n-kou or the na-yanka (I do not know the name of this plant), put to boil and soak in water. To make it effective, at least two kola nuts are offered to the fetish and five hens are sacrificed to it.

782 764 of the staff, which lives off the altar. For the mere act of having killed a dog or a goat, of which they receive a good share of the meat, they get a fee consisting of a basket of sorghum (18 to 20 kilograms) and 1, 600 cowrie shells (about 2 francs).

Since initiates of the fetish are the only ones who can touch the corpse and lay it in its final home, they receive 8, 000 to 10, 000 cowrie shells (about 8 to 10 francs) on that score. At the end of the sangafo (3) the god's retinue go and sweep the hut of the deceased,

3. Sangafo, to go and offer condolences to the relatives of a deceased."

purify it with holy water, and drive out the last gnâma of the murdering Komo, and for this five fine hens are slaughtered. As payment for their trouble, the family also gives them five to six meters of cloth and 8 to 10 ba (4) (about 8 to 10 francs); 50 francs do not cover

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4. A ba is worth 800 cowrie shells or about 1 franc. (The Bambara count by 40 and 80, and not by 50 and 100. 40, débé; 80, kémé.)

the cost.

[43] Fortunately, the family does not bear all the expenses. Friends help a little, and everyone brings his offering: from one person they get a /228/ hen, from another a débé (40 cowrie shells) or a kémé (80 cowrie shells). Nevertheless, they bear most of the cost, and [824] the fetishes are one of the chief reasons for that bonding of children (1)